

## Rules of Formal Essay Writing

1. **No abbreviation:** Write words like California, television, and Presentation. In certain cases, government agencies may be abbreviated if you write the agency's name out fully first (Federal Bureau of Investigation, etc.).
2. **No slang:** Don't use slang like "guys", "cops", "hella", "and then we saw this man", "he was like really cool", etc.
3. **No "etc.":** Con't use "etc." or "and so on".
4. **No "things" or "a lot":** Do not use these phrases because they are over used and vague.
5. **No contractions:** Write out "he is" not "he's"; write out "who is" not "who's"; write out "would not" not "wouldn't"; write out "do not" not "don't"; etc.
6. **No extra words:** Avoid extra words that have no meaning: "well anyway, you know, etc. Don't write "I think" or "in my opinion" because I know this it is your idea or opinion because it is your paper.
7. **No first or second person:** In a formal paper, only third person is acceptable: he, she, it, they and related forms (one, the reader, etc.). Don't use first (we, I, me, my, us, our, etc.) or second (you, your, yours) person unless approved by the teacher.
8. **Numbers:** Spell out numbers: "six" not "6"; "twenty-three" not "23"; dates and long numbers may be written out: 1985, 1844, 1,234,567.
9. **Titles:** Underline titles of major works, such as novels, plays, movies, etc.; short works (short stories, poems, etc.) should be in quotation marks.
10. **Proofread:** Check your paper for typing errors. Make corrections neatly in black ink.
11. **Spelling:** Proof only for spelling, with your dictionary in hand.
12. **Other mistakes:** Look carefully for grammar errors, especially in areas where you've made mistakes before. Look through your paper for one type of error at a time: verb tense only, fragments only, run-ons only, agreement only, etc.
13. **Quotations:** Never copy an author's words without using quotations and crediting the source.
14. **Punctuation:** Carefully check for commas, semicolons, quotes, etc.
15. The title of your paper should be original and it does not need to be put in quotation marks or underlined.